

SPECIAL RECOGNITION CATEGORY - INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC DIVISION

Tennessee Waltz

J.C. LEWIS, JR.

VA MEDICAL CENTER

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

Eighty-year-old Army veteran J.C. Lewis, Jr., has always been involved with music. He has mastered many instruments throughout his life including piano, guitar, accordion and harmonica, and learned to play these instruments with no formal instruction. Diagnosed with dementia, he now resides at the VA Medical Center in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Claude Norton, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, says, “When he first was admitted to the dementia program, J.C. tended to isolate himself. One day, a group of young people gave a performance with violins and J.C. began to play *Tennessee Waltz* on his harmonica. He received so much positive feedback from others, that he now attends small groups and initiates conversations.”

The response of J.C. Lewis demonstrates the therapeutic influence of music and its positive effect on quality of life.